

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) A multiplexer transmitting data as a cell through a cell transmission path, said multiplexer comprising:

a first delay-fluctuation adding unit adding a first maximum value of delay fluctuation occurring when said multiplexer transmits the cell, to a predetermined area of the cell;

a second delay-fluctuation adding unit adding a second maximum value of delay fluctuation occurring when said multiplexer reproduces the data from the cell, to said predetermined area, obtaining a maximum delay fluctuation value designating the total fluctuation time of the cell transmission path;

a storage unit storing ~~the data~~ a data portion of the cell to be reproduced; and

a data-read control unit controlling reading ~~the data~~ said data portion stored in said storage unit ~~by following a maximum value of delay fluctuation stored in said predetermined area,~~ wherein data read from said storage unit is delayed by an interval equal to said maximum delay fluctuating value.

2. (original) The multiplexer as claimed in claim 1, wherein said first delay-fluctuation adding unit adding said first maximum value of delay fluctuation occurring when said multiplexer transmits the cell to a next multiplexer on the cell transmission path and a third maximum value of delay fluctuation occurring on the cell transmission path between said multiplexer and said next multiplexer, to said predetermined area.

3. (canceled)

4. (currently amended) The multiplexer as claimed in claim 3 ~~1~~, wherein said data-read control unit determines said maximum delay fluctuation value ~~having to delay said timing~~ only once after a setting of the cell transmission path.

5. (currently amended) A method of controlling absorption of delay fluctuation of data transmitted as a cell through a plurality of relay stations, said method comprising the steps of:

adding a first maximum value of delay fluctuation of each relay station to a predetermined area of the cell that is to be transmitted through the plurality of relay stations;

storing a data portion of a received cell to be reproduced, in a buffer at a relay station; and

adding a second maximum value of delay fluctuation cause by reproducing said data portion, to said predetermined area, obtaining a maximum delay fluctuation value designating the total fluctuation time of the plurality of relay stations; and

reading said data portion of the received cell from said buffer by following the ~~maximum value of delay fluctuation stored in the predetermined area of the received cell,~~ wherein data read from said buffer is delayed by an interval equal to said maximum delay fluctuation value, thereby absorbing the delay fluctuation of the received cell[[;]].

6. (original) The method as claimed in claim 5, comprising the step of adding the maximum value of delay fluctuation to said predetermined area of the cell at each relay station.

7., 8. (canceled)